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COMPTROLLER GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20548

B-175182

The Honorable William Proxmire  
United States Senate

OCT 9 1973

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Dear Senator Proxmire:



This is our reply to your July 16, 1973, letter requesting information on the actual savings resulting from the Air Force's substituting Minol II for Tritonal as the explosive bombfill in M-117 bombs from November 1970 to February 1972 and from July 1 through December 31, 1972. As agreed with your staff, we obtained the Air Force's estimates of savings, as follows:

	<u>Estimated savings</u>
	(millions)
November 1970 to February 1972	\$ 8.476
July 1 to December 31, 1972	5.541
January 1973 to March 1973	<u>1.289</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>\$15.306</u></b>

The savings from using Minol II were calculated on the basis of actual production and use of Minol II-117 bombs and a standard cost differential per bomb. The actual cost difference between Minol II and Tritonal has fluctuated since November 1970 because of changes in the prices of TNT and ammonium nitrate.

According to its records, the Air Force saved \$8.476 million by using Minol II from November 1970 to February 1972.

From March through June 1972, M-117 bombs were loaded with Tritonal instead of Minol II. The Air Force decided to use Tritonal in January 1972 because of a decline in the M-117 usage rate and because of problems associated with storing Minol II-loaded bombs. A subsequent increase in the M-117 usage rate resulted in a changeback to Minol II. This change was slowed, however, by a scarcity of ammonium nitrate--an ingredient of Minol II.

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The Air Force resumed loading M-117 bombs with Minol II in July 1972. According to its records, the Air Force realized a saving of \$5.541 million on bombs produced from July 1, 1972, to December 31, 1972.

In addition to savings realized during the two periods you asked for, the Air Force also showed savings of \$1.289 million from January to March 1973, at which time it stopped accepting Minol II-loaded bombs.

As we pointed out in our July 18, 1972, report to you, the Air Force had used Minol as a fill as early as May 1968. The Air Force's records show savings of about \$21 million during the period May 1968 to October 1969.

We did not obtain Air Force comments on this report. We do not plan to distribute this report further unless you agree or publicly announce its contents.

Sincerely yours,

'Deputy'

R.F.KELLER

Comptroller General  
of the United States